



Hertfordshire County Council  
County Hall, Pegs Lane  
Hertford SG13 8DE

6 November 2020

## An important message to providers of out-of-school activities and wraparound childcare, and to parents and carers of children under 18 using these services:

We know how well-loved our out-of-school clubs and activities are in Hertfordshire, but right now our top priority is stopping the spread of coronavirus. The situation we are in is extremely serious and we all have to follow the rules, so we can all get back to doing the things we enjoy as soon as it is safe to do so.

### Cases of coronavirus are still rising in Hertfordshire.

***Cases of coronavirus are rising in Hertfordshire, with 12% of all infections in the last nine MONTHS occurring over the last seven days. This is an extremely worrying trend which highlights the severity of the situation and the real need for these greater restrictions.***

The Government has announced new guidance on the operation of and attendance at out-of-school activities and wraparound childcare following the introduction of new restrictions on Thursday 5 November. You can read this guidance in full at:

[https://www.gov.uk/guidance/education-and-childcare-settings-new-national-restrictions-from-5-november-2020?utm\\_source=7427a8d7-6fbd-4315-b29f-2c648cfb91a1&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate#ooss](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/education-and-childcare-settings-new-national-restrictions-from-5-november-2020?utm_source=7427a8d7-6fbd-4315-b29f-2c648cfb91a1&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate#ooss)

### What we need you to do:

Under the new regulations, **all children and adults in Hertfordshire must stay at home wherever possible, unless exceptions apply** such as attending school, being unable to work at home or buying food.

We understand that extra-curricular activities are important for our children and young people and their development so these changes may be difficult. However, it's vital that we all work together to reduce the spread of coronavirus if we are to avoid restrictions continuing longer than they need to.

We are also aware that this temporary closure will have a real impact on businesses and organisations providing these services, and we thank you for all you have done and continue to do to keep our children, young people and the wider community safe.

Thank you to all those businesses and organisations who have followed national guidelines and made your activities COVID-19 secure. We hope that those of you who can, will now move your activities online if you haven't already done so. For those activities that cannot be done online, we are grateful to you for following the guidance and closing while these necessary tighter restrictions are in place.

## What can continue to operate?

The following table outlines our current understanding of those services that can continue to operate, and those that must close following the latest guidance:

What may stay open and operate	What must close or operate online
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DfE or OFSTED registered premises.</li> <li>• Childcare or respite care <b>explicitly and primarily</b> undertaken to allow parents to work or study which is DfE or OFSTED registered (<i>the majority of children must attend for these reasons</i>).</li> <li>• Respite care and wraparound childcare which is not registered but has explicit approval of the Education Authority (i.e. anything explicitly operated under the Hertfordshire short break local offer).</li> <li>• Activities that are <b>primarily</b> used by <b>home-educating parents</b> as part of arrangements for their child to receive a suitable full-time education (which could include, for example, tuition centres, supplementary schools, or private tutors).</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>The following activities can continue online but <u>NOT</u> face-to-face</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any activity not DfE or OFSTED registered.</li> <li>• Supplementary schools which are <b>not</b> offering provision necessary to enable parents to work, seek work, attend education or training, or for the purposes of respite care for carers.</li> <li>• Private tuition unless offered primarily to home-educating parents (see opposite).</li> <li>• Catch-up homework provision that is not part of a DfE or OFSTED registered provision.</li> <li>• Voluntary religious schools, such as Sunday schools and Madrasahs.</li> <li>• Any out-of-school activity which is not <b>necessary</b> to enable parents to work, seek work, attend education or training, or for the purposes of respite care for carers, e.g. dance, cookery, ballet schools, non-elite sports clubs including football/rugby clubs, swimming, athletics, gymnastics etc.</li> </ul>

## If you are permitted to operate, you must do so safely.

Any facility, premises or business which continues to operate must do so in a COVID-19 secure way, with detailed risk assessments and complete infection control practice. This is a legal obligation under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. You can find guidance here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

## We will enforce safe and legal operations.

We want everyone to operate safely, which is why we have created a dedicated team to work with schools and colleges. We have also created an information and guidance hub here: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus>

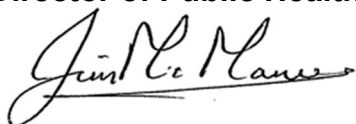
We would rather support everyone to work safely. But where we have concerns that an activity is happening which has not been properly risk-assessed, or where we feel operations are unsafe, we will have no choice but to use powers given to the Director of Public Health as necessary. These include being able to prohibit or fully close activities. Similarly, you can report premises which are operating unsafely to the Police using 111 or to the County Council at [https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/ufs/ONLINE\\_CONTACT\\_BETA.eb?SERVICE\\_PARAM=Hertfordshire+County+Council&ebd=0&ebz=1\\_1604656073872](https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/ufs/ONLINE_CONTACT_BETA.eb?SERVICE_PARAM=Hertfordshire+County+Council&ebd=0&ebz=1_1604656073872)

**Operating when you are not permitted to do so, either as a result of the regulations relating to COVID-19 or in breach of a direction made by the Director of Public Health, is a criminal offence. It may also invalidate your insurances.**

We have already had to deal with a number of providers that have broken the rules and, while we remain confident that everyone will do the right thing, we will not hesitate in taking action against those who don't.

Yours sincerely,

Jim McManus,  
Director of Public Health



Jenny Coles,  
Director of Children's Services

